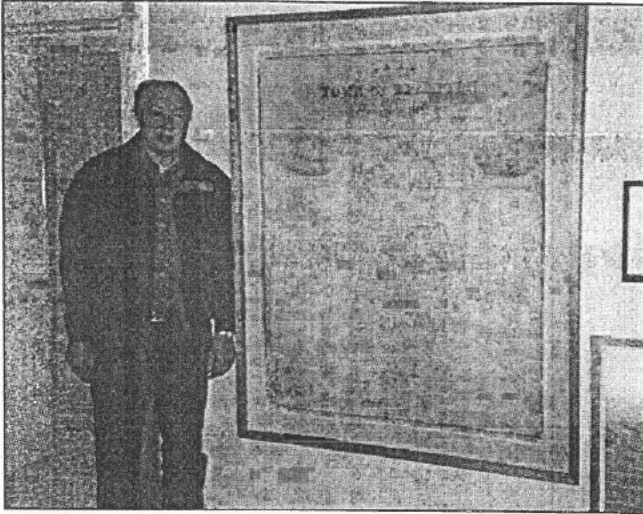


ON THE MAP

The 1857 Plan of the Town of Brampton is here and everyone can be in on it.



BHS Treasurer Gerry Clarkson orients himself with The Map.
Photo courtesy of the Gunter Collection.

Unveil - Unravel - Reveal

The twelfth edition of Buffy's Corner salutes the premier BHS project. The restored 1857 Map will be unveiled at the Peel Heritage Complex on September 21. Posters printed by Peel Graphics will be on sale.

The Ontario Conservation Review Board recently recommended that the City proceed to designate the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 15 building, historically known as Alder Lea, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. Next step is the implementation of a designation by-law by city council this month.

Excitement for the newsletter staff - thanks to researcher Rowena Cooper and The Map the Buffy mystery is solved. Ongoing doubts and scepticism about the location of the famous public house owned by William Buffy, is affirmed with Rowena's revelation of the real Buffy's Corners.

Our contributors have unearthed interesting stories for your enjoyment, guaranteed to welcome you back to the BHS home front.

We have come a long way. The Two Marys (Bailey and Little) recall the "good old days", Fred "Number Ten" Kee continues part three of the Westervelt saga and George Duncan offers up an inspiring heritage tale.

History happens and you are there.

Buffy

Buffy's Corner

The official newsletter of the Brampton Historical Society
Conserve, Educate and Celebrate Brampton's History

Volume 3, No. 3 September 2001

Buffy's Corners, the original name of Brampton, was the site of the respectable tavern owned by William Buffy, considered to be the father of Brampton. His pioneer spirit (pun intended) lives on in the name of our journal. History "buffs" are invited into The Corner to share their stories and comments.

In This Issue:

Phoenix From The Ashes

Buffy Reborn

Looking Back

Westervelt's Corners

Buffy's Corner Staff

Editor	Dorothy Willis
Assistant Editor	Angie Duchesne
Production Manager	Gerry Clarkson
Photographer	Heather Gunter

Brampton Historical Society Executive

President	Heather Gunter
Past President	Paul Hunt
Vice President	Michael Avis
Treasurer	Gerry Clarkson
Recording Secretary	Janice Smith
Corresponding Secretary	Peter Murphy

Buffy's Corner
c/o Dorothy Willis

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c/o Peter Murphy

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Brampton Hysterical Society Joke-of-the-Month

Buffy's Eye Doctor is from Alaska.

He's an Optical Aleutian. (We apologise for the Bunny original, but you heard it here first!)

Buffy's Corner, published 4 times per year, is free to BHS members (see back page for membership details)

Buffy's Corner, Copyright 2001

Printed by Peel Graphics Inc., 10 John St. Brampton

All Aboard!

Dorothy Conover
Edward Conover
Peter Coote
Joseph Damien
Murtle Freed
Carmen Kellam
Ivy Kellam
Kimberley Reis
Jan Sothern
Ted Sothern



BHS Members: 110 and counting!

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Heather Gunter

Here's to a successful year 2001! We had great speakers, good tours and the hospitality of the Village Deli. Pasta Shop owner, Frank Vespi, graciously welcomed us at his deli after our walking tour of Brampton, hosted by Steve Collie on June 9. A second walking tour of Brampton is planned for October 13.

Our fall schedule is exciting and will be of interest to young and old. Watch for our flyer at our meetings, libraries and recreation centres. You can join up from the info in the flyers; it's never too late to join. The BHS is always eager for new and old stories. Everyone and everything is special in their or its own way.

Thank you to our committees and to our volunteers for their hard work to make the BHS such a success. Like I have commented in the past, with the spokes in working order, the wheel runs like clockwork.

Thanks to Ben Madill for his efforts to keep our clock running and on time.

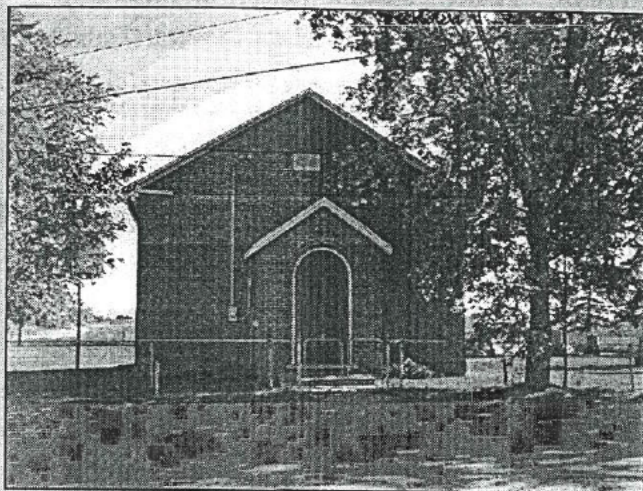
Thanks to Brian and Donna Bonsma for our web site which is up and working. With your help we will be bigger and better with the web site in full force.

BHS CONTACTS

President, Heather Gunter.....	██████████
Vice President, Michael Avis.....	██████████
Recording Secretary, Janice Smith.....	██████████
Corresponding Secretary, Peter Murphy ..	██████████
Membership, Colin Baker.....	██████████
Newsletter, Dorothy Willis.....	██████████

Ghosts of Ebenezer's Past

Michael Avis, Vice President and Architecture Chair



The Ebenezer Church; here today ...?

Development sprawl once again threatens the existence of another Brampton landmark. The Ebenezer United Church and cemetery along with the adjacent Ebenezer Schoolhouse - located at the corner of the Gore Road and Ebenezer Road - which once enjoyed a quiet pastoral setting are being engulfed by residential and industrial development. Even now, with the encroaching 'progress', a quiet walk through the small cemetery reveals the names of families who were instrumental in the settlement of the area and whose descendants we still recognise today as valuable members of our community.

The Ebenezer United Church enjoyed a long and fruitful life as the spiritual centre of the surrounding area. The church held its last service in 1998 leaving the future of the church and cemetery very much in doubt.

Fortunately, a determined group of residents has established a Foundation for the purpose of examining the feasibility of renovating and preserving the church and the old schoolhouse. With the rapid growth in the surrounding area, the Foundation feels that uses can be found for both historic landmarks.

The Ebenezer Schoolhouse is another matter. Owned by the City for many years, it has been allowed to deteriorate into embarrassingly abysmal condition. It is painfully obvious the past regimes at City Hall have regarded the old Ebenezer Schoolhouse as merely a revenue-generating 'pile of bricks' with no intrinsic heritage value.

Let us hope that the current Council takes a more enlightened position and works together with the Foundation to ensure that both the church and schoolhouse not only enjoy many more 'useful' years but also remain as a very important, tangible reminder of our pioneer past.

BHS HAPPENINGS: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

May 17, Restoring Heritage Homes with architectural historian George Duncan, Heritage Coordinator of the Town of Richmond Hill, and well-known author, artist and expert on Ontario's early architecture.

The theme of his talk was "Move it or Lose it", the last resort for saving heritage homes might be to move them.



George Duncan takes time to chat with BHS members Freda Garden and Paul Willoughby after his talk.

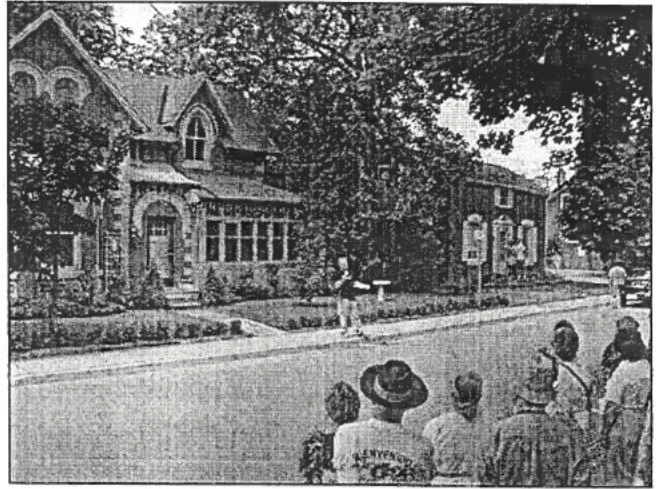
George Duncan's recent project, "York County Mouldings from Historic Interiors 1820 - 1920", will soon be published by the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.



George Duncan's presentation just slides right along.

June 9, Walking Tour of Brampton - Part 1

Tour guide Stompin' Steve Collie gave his inaugural tour of downtown Brampton.



Steve Collie keeps his distance from the mob on John Street.



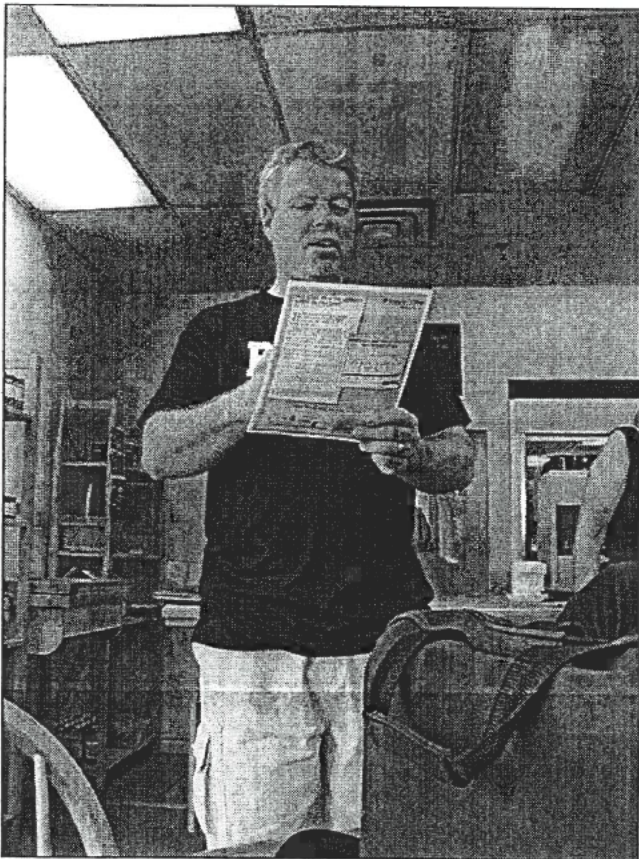
Number please! This is Brampton's original Bell Building.



A stopover at the historical and happening Harmsworth Decorating Centre (on Main St. South). Jim and Scott Harmsworth welcomed us into their store for some historical reminiscences.

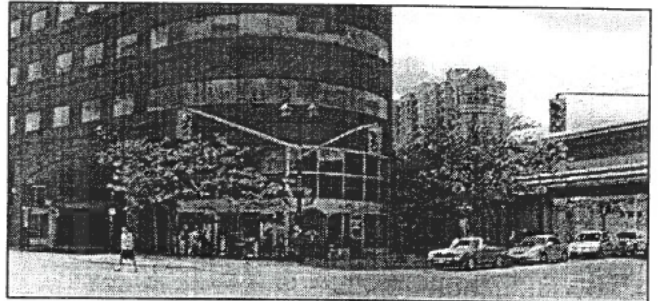


The tour stops for a factoid or two while in the vista of City Hall.

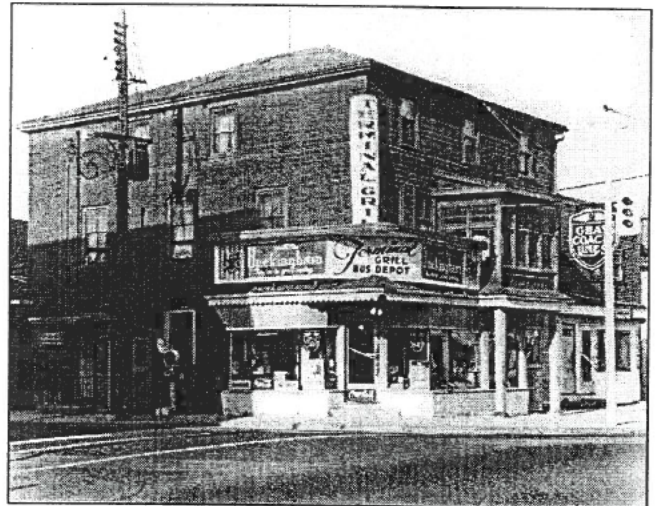


Steve Collie gives the final address of the tour while everyone enjoys refreshments courtesy of Village Deli proprietor Frank Vespi.

the village
deli and pasta shoppe
Frank Vespi
 8 Nelson Street
 (N.W. corner of Hwy. 10 & Nelson)
 Brampton, Ontario L6X 4J2
 (905) 450-1020



Now: the Village Deli and Pasta Shop at the corner of Main and Nelson Streets.



Then: the same view, showing the Terminal Grill.

Paparazzi Pictured



Buffy's Corner paparazzi-at-large: Heather Gunter (AKA "The Prez") and Angie Duchesne get a shot of their own medicine.

Photo courtesy of the Gunter Collection

PATS FOR PAM

Michael Avis

All of Brampton should be justly proud of their new 'celebrity'. It was announced recently in Ottawa that Pam Douglas, reporter for the Brampton Guardian, had been awarded the prestigious Heritage Canada Foundation's Journalism Prize.

The Brampton Historical Society, knowing so well the impact that Pam has had on local heritage issues, felt that putting together the required documentation for the nomination process was a pleasure. Having a chance to read again some of the articles she has written over the past ten years served to reinforce what an ally the heritage community has in Pam Douglas.

We felt quite confident that she would win. In fact it did not come as a surprise to us that an independent jury of heritage experts selected her *unanimously*. Congratulations Pam!

Kee Notes from Fred (Continued from page 12)

When Thompson Russell completed renovations to the house and property, it became Norman's Lunch, owned by Ernie Floton. Next owner was Charlie Royce and then Harry Binns and his wife Dolly and the "Inn" became known as the White Motor Grill.

In the sixties Mr. and Mrs. Bak purchased it and they built a motel called Flowertown Motel - both of these properties exist today.

The balance of the original fifty acres was rented to the Bovairds for pasture. At one time there was a house and barn, however both became derelict for lack of maintenance by the owner.

I must mention that north of the Westervelt homestead stood a small frame house that had been the Church property; however, when the Church was no longer in use the building was moved to the next farm north and was used as a garage.

Oral history says the house on the opposite side of the highway was moved onto the Church Property.

In my school days Mrs. Olga Bell and her brother Whispering Tommy lived here along with her two school-aged children, Olga and Johnny.

All of Lot 11 W. Chinguacousy, which was a fifty-acre parcel, is now developed.

Nifty Nifty! Look Who's Fifty, September 15, 2001

Glendale School, 35 Sunset Blvd., built after Central and McHugh Schools when Brampton stretched with its post-war student boom, was located on the north west fringe of Brampton in the fifties.

MARVELLOUS MAP MUSINGS ...



The official celebration of the restoration of the 1857 Plan of the Town of Brampton (Bristow & Fitzgerald Surveyors) will be held on September 21, 7:30 p.m. at the Peel Heritage Complex (9 Wellington Street East, Brampton).

Hospitality of Wine and Cheese courtesy of The Art Den; Entertainment courtesy of The Jazz Mechanics.



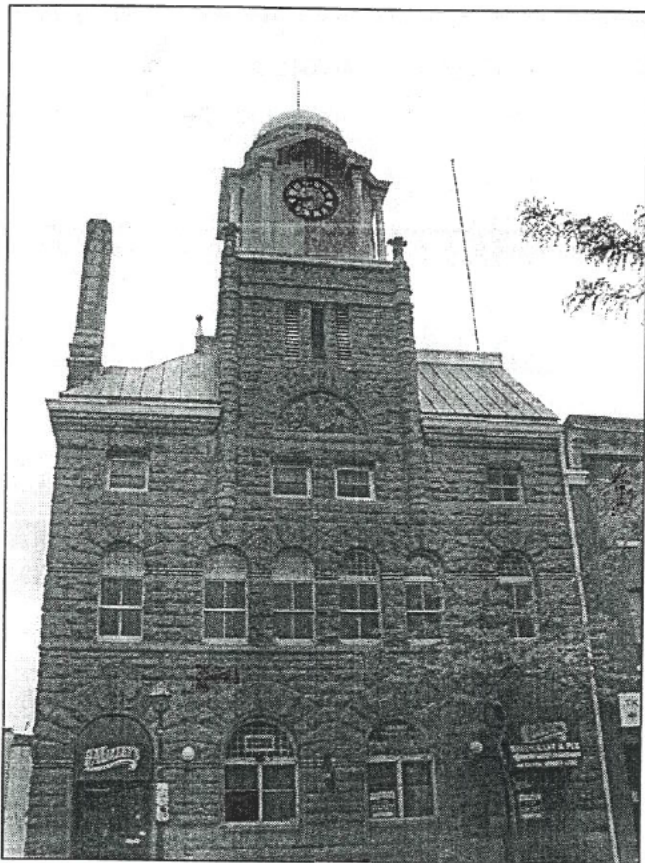
Map Launch organiser Michael Avis with BHS Recording Secretary Janice Smith and President Heather Gunter in the foreshadowing of Map Gala festivities.

**BRAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE
FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS
SUPPORT OF THE BRISTOW &
FITZGERALD 1857 MAP OF THE
TOWN OF BRAMPTON
RESTORATION & POSTER PROJECT:**

PEEL GRAPHICS INC.
MARSHALL MACKLIN MONAGHAN
PROUSE DASH & CROUCH
GOODISON INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.
THE ART DEN
PEEL HERITAGE COMPLEX
THE ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION
THE JAZZ MECHANICS

**Renew Your membership: The BHS
Memberships for 2002 will be available soon.
Remember: the early bird gets the worm!**

WATCHING THE DOMINION CLOCK



Clockmeister Big Ben Madill keeps us right on time with his stewardship of the Dominion Clock!

FORESHADOWING FOUR FALL FEATURES

September 20, "Show and Tell" BHS members are invited to share their treasures from Brampton's past. For more info and advance booking, please contact a member of the BHS executive.

October 13, Walking Tour of Brampton - Part 2
Tour guide Stompin' Steve Collie gives an encore tour of historical downtown Brampton.

October 18, Every Quilt Tells a Story
Cathy Willoughby with her Trunk Show will piece together a perspective of quilting from mid 1800's to modern times. A quilter for thirty years, Cathy is past president and present member of the **Brampton Quilters' Guild**.

November 15, How to Start a Family Tree
The BHS branches out with a talk by Dorothy Kew, Chair of the Halton/Peel Genealogical Society. And, back by popular demand (and the demand of the Ontario Historical Society affiliate bylaws), our Annual General meeting and Executive elections! Why not volunteer for a position? C'mon folks, it's not like you're going to be busy watching the Blue Jays pennant race!

Sports Hall of Fame Anniversary

Ken "Scoop" Giles

The Brampton Sports Hall of Fame will hold its 21st annual induction ceremonies-banquet October 3 at the Brampton centre for Sports and Entertainment.

Founded in 1979 by a group of dedicated sports enthusiasts in conjunction with the Brampton Parks and Recreation Department, the Sports Hall of Fame honours residents of Brampton who have distinguished themselves as exceptional athletes or builders of sport in Brampton.

When Brampton's Sports Hall of Fame moved from Century Gardens Recreation Centre to the Brampton Centre for Sports and Entertainment (in 1999) at 7575 Kennedy Road South, one kilometre south of Steeles Avenue, it attained more exposure and visibility.

The Sports Hall of Fame seeks worthy nominees from the community. Nomination forms and an explanation of the criteria for eligibility are available from Hall of Fame secretary Don Doan 905.874.2310. The deadline for applications for any given year is December 31 of the previous year. Bios and portraits of all inductees can be viewed on the web at:

www.prousedash.ca/shof/index.htm.

This year's inductees to the Sports Hall of Fame are Athletes: Andrew Quinn, speed skating; Sean Simpson, hockey, and Bram Wilfong, lacrosse, while the Builders are: Terry Baytor, softball; Harry Benham, lacrosse and Spence Mulholland, softball/hockey.

Twenty-two sports: hockey, track and field, lawn bowling, baseball, fastball, curling, football, archery, rowing, skiing, golf, figure skating, swimming, boxing, judo, taekwondo, harness racing, tennis, lacrosse, speed skating and gymnastics are currently represented in the Sports Hall of Fame.

Entertainer at this year's induction dinner will be comedian Craig "Frenchie" McFarlane. Tickets for this year's dinner are now available at Century Gardens Recreation Centre, 340 Vodden Street east. Ticket prices are \$40 single, \$80 pair, or \$400 table of 10 (not-for profit community groups). There is also a "corporate" table purchase \$500 (table of 10). For public ticket sales call Century Gardens, 905. 874.2814, or for corporate sales contact Don Doan 905.874.2310.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Historic Bovaird House

Afternoon Tea n' Fashion Show

Sunday, September 30, 1:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Reserved seating only. Tickets \$10. Call 905.874.2804

Apple Harvest Tea

Sunday, October 14, 11:00 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Christmas Open House

December 1 & 2, 10:00 a.m. - 4 p.m.

SE corner Kennedy Road and Bovaird Drive, Brampton

Info: 905.874.2804, bovairdhouse@hotmail.com

Web site: www.bovairdhouse.ca

Halton - Peel Branch, Ontario Genealogical Society

"Tombstone Tales from Ontario Cemeteries" with speaker Harvey Medland, author.

Sunday, September 23, 2:00 p.m.

Chinguacousy Branch - Brampton Public Library

150 Central Park Drive, Brampton

"Using Maps in Family History Research" with speaker Fawne Stratford-Devai.

Sunday, October 28, 2:00 p.m.

Chinguacousy Branch - Brampton Public Library

150 Central Park Drive, Brampton

"Records of the Dead" with speaker J. Brian Gilchrist.

Sunday, November 25, 2:00 p.m.

Chinguacousy Branch - Brampton Public Library

150 Central Park Drive, Brampton

Info: call Dorothy Kew, [REDACTED]

Friends of the Schoolhouse

A Schoolhouse event

Eva Ardiel speaks to the Mississauga South Historical Society at the Texaco Room, Port Credit Public Library.

Tuesday, September 18 7:30 p.m.

Info: 905-274-0927.

Visit the Schoolhouse

On the 2nd Sunday of every month the Old Britannia Schoolhouse will be open from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Info: [REDACTED]

**BHS Meetings - the third Thursday of
September, October, November, 7:15 p.m.
Heart Lake Presbyterian Church
25 Ruth Street, Brampton
Admission free to members, others: \$5**

Esqueusing Historical Society

Fairview Cemetery

Wednesday, September 12, 7:00 p.m.

Join us as we tour the beautiful grounds of Fairview Cemetery in Acton. We will highlight some of the older and more interesting stones.

PLEASE NOTE: We will meet at the cemetery and there will be NO refreshments served after. Bring your walking shoes and a bottle of water to keep cool if the evening is warm. Note the early start time.

FAIRVIEW CEMETERY on Cobblehill Road, Acton.

Historic Tokens

Wed. Oct. 10th, 7:30 p.m.

Scott Douglas will be leading an interesting discussion and display of tokens used in our historic local businesses.

Location to be announced.

Lorne Scots

Wed. Nov. 14th, 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Rick Ruggle will talk about the Lorne Scots organization and its history within our area.

Knox Presbyterian Church, Georgetown.



PEEL GRAPHICS INC.

10 John Street
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Ontario L6W 1Y9
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General Printers Since 1933

Buffy's Corner is printed thanks to the generosity of Peel Graphics Inc.

New Websites to check out!

HACE

There is a link to the new Brampton Arts Council HACE Website (Heritage, Arts, Culture and Entertainment Initiative):

www.hace.ca/index.html

HACE promotes the features and facilities of historic downtown Brampton and links audiences and businesses in Brampton.

Historic Bovaird House

Are now brewing up something on the web at www.bovairdhouse.ca

"The water would overflow its banks and run down the main street and often take in at the hall door and run through the house. I have seen the water about a foot deep on the bar-room floor but it never got as high as to reach the bottles."

Buffy Reborn

Roving Reporter Rowena Cooper

"In this last chapter I showed how the Chinguacousy Council, notwithstanding their pretended economy, fool away the people's money. If anyone doubts the correctness of my statement let him examine his tax bill for this year ..."

So starts an outspoken article in the December 7, 1897 Brampton Conservator. Entitled "Ratepayer's Ramblings" the writer reveals himself only as an old resident of Brampton. Fortunately for those of us chasing the elusive William Buffy his "ramblings" also serve as a tantalising glimpse of Brampton in the 1840s.

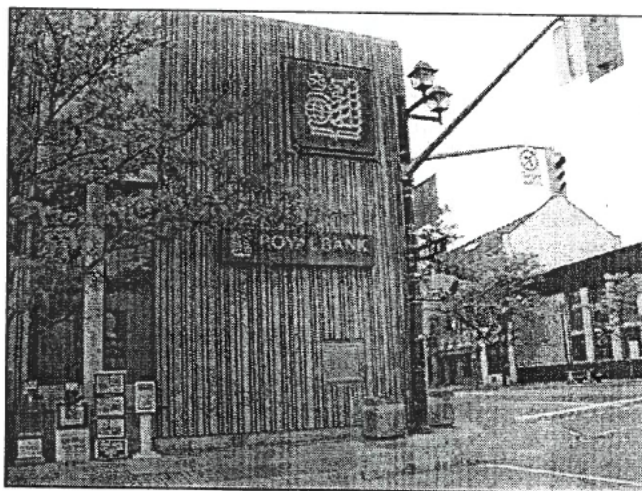
"Buffy's Corner" readers will remember that William Buffy did not own property in Brampton. The 1837 Directory for the Home District puts him on lot 5, concession 1 West of Hurontario Street (WHS) in Chinguacousy Township but examination of the Abstract Index to Deeds revealed that the patent for lot 5 was given by the Canada Company to John Elliott in 1840. "Ratepayer's Ramblings" place Buffy on lot 6, concession 1 West of Hurontario Street, Chinguacousy Township.

I quote directly from the article:

"In those days there was a distillery in Brampton - it stood about opposite Mr. Laird's present skating rink and about where the street now is. There was no street there then, neither was there a railroad. It (the distillery) was owned by the late Wm. Gardner, who was the first hotel keeper in the now classic town of Brampton, he having bought the property on the corner on which was erected an unfinished building intended for an hotel, by one Wm. Buffy, and on which now stands the magnificent buildings owned by those worthy and estimable citizens the Stork family. I may say, however, that previous to all this there was a log house on the same corner owned by Mr. Buffy, who was a shoemaker, and he sold liquor there. The bar-room and the shoe-shop was all in one room. His business kept increasing and after a time he pulled down the log house and erected, as I said, a new building which Mr. Gardner purchased from him. It was quite a respectable edifice having a hallway through the centre and nice cosy rooms on each side. It was a very

respectable building for the times and everything kept clean and tidy in and about it, but the spring flood was often the cause of great trouble to the owner, (the roadway at that time was low it having been raised since by the townspeople one time and other at least six feet), the water would overflow its banks and run down the main street and often take in at the hall door and run through the house. I have seen the water about a foot deep on the bar-room floor but it never got as high as to reach the bottles. Whiskey in those days could be bought for 20c per gallon so there was not much temptation for letting the water get into the bottles..."

Examination of the Abstract Index to Deeds for Lot 6, Concession 1 WHS, Chinguacousy Township shows that William Gardner purchased the lot on the corner of present day Queen and Main Streets in 1843 from a William Fead. Reading the deed is also informative as both stakes marking the south-west and north-west boundaries of the lot were placed in the centre of the Etobicoke River. No wonder the water flowed right through the middle of the building at times. 1843 was the year that William Buffy purchased land in Caledon Township which he farmed for about sixteen years. It was also the year that his son William Vernon lost his wife Mary, aged 21.



Banking facilities are now conveniently located at Lot 6, Concession 1 WHS, Chinguacousy Township.

I wondered how to get affirmation of a hotel on the north west side of Queen and Main Streets and had to go no further than the wonderful map, The Plan of the Town of Brampton owned by the BHS and housed at the Region of Peel Archives. The hotel is marked clearly.

I am off on my travels in September. The very same evening that the BHS unveils the Map of Brampton at the Peel Heritage Complex, I will be in Brampton, Cumbria hopefully chasing the almost equally elusive roots of John Elliott.

Looking Back

Recorded by Mary Little - as told by Mary Agnes Brownridge Bailey, the daughter of the late Ellery and Mary (Minnie) Brownridge.



Proud Marys: Recorder Mary Little and Narrator Mary Agnes Brownridge Bailey.

Photo Courtesy of the Gunter Collection

Looking back at her younger life in Peel her memories start in 1919 when her dad bought the Forbes 100 acre farm situated at the Base Line (Steeles Ave.) and the First Line East (Kennedy Road).

"We also owned another 25 acres south of the Base Line, known as The Flats. I'd get up at 6 a.m. to milk the cows and then I'd lead them to The Flats to join the pasture cows and the bull. I was scared of that bull. I used to do anything to avoid him, even walking all the way around the cemetery to keep out of his way."

School days found Mary attending Broddytown SSB 23, located about a half-mile along the Base Line between the First and Second Lines East.

In this one-room schoolhouse the students were taught by Miss Bertha Aiken, who was a very good teacher by Mary's estimation. Thinking of that school, Mary recalls the time when her family became its caretaker, sweeping the floors, dusting, and starting the potbelly stove.

On Arbour Day in May, it was a tradition that all the students would help clean the inside and outside of the school. After Mary completed Senior Fourth (what we refer to as Grade 8) she entered Brampton High School on Church Street. However, before the first year was finished, she decided to stay home and help around the farm. Her two brothers were still quite young; John was 9 years and Joe 11 years Mary's junior.

Mary recalls a time on the farm when tragedy struck. "My mother had hung summer savoury behind the stove to dry, then joined me out in the barn for our chores. The savoury caught on fire, which swiftly spread throughout the back kitchen. I ran into the house, knowing that my brothers and grandmother were sleeping upstairs. I woke my brothers then proceeded to help my grandmother. I pulled her down the stairs. You could hear bumpety-bump all the way down. Looking back you could say that I rescued her in a swift but not-so-comfortable manner. We lived in our front door garage until just before Christmas when we moved back into the house."

Mary looks back at the depression years and recalls how blessed her family was during these times when many others were less fortunate. "Along with having lots of milk and eggs, my mother's vegetable garden grew in abundance. Our apple orchard, which was located on what is now known as Orchard Drive, also provided for us. At Christmastime, my father would sell geese and turkeys. The slaughter part was never something I hung around for. After the boiling was complete, I would take over. My job was plucking and sorting the feathers. The goose feathers went into a separate bucket and were used later by my mother to make pillows."

"My dad was a great man to show his horses at the fairs. He'd always win a prize. We always had horses, so in the early years I would take a horse and buggy up Centre Road (now known as Main Street) to attend the service at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church."

As years went by the family got a new mode of transportation as well as a new church. They started driving to St. Paul's United for the Sunday service and in the afternoon, Mary walked back up to church for Sunday School. "I would meet up with my friends, Helen and her brother Ray McMurchy, and we would walk up together. I walked that Centre Road a good many times."

Another memory Mary shares, "My family got into making cream. We would help make the cream by using a separator, which was a hand machine. We'd all take turns rotating the handle. The cream was gathered and delivered to Peel Creamery. We had to wash the machine by hand and make it ready for the next day. It was a long job, considering the amount of disks it had."

Even though Mary worked hard, she still found time to pursue an interest in music. "I took piano lessons from Miss Wardlaw, who lived on West Street. I'd walk there, too. Eventually I was able to play for my Sunday School class."

Mary met and married Richard (Dick) Bailey; they had two daughters, Mary Ellen and Joan.

Mary moved out of Peel when she married Dick in 1939, as he was hired to work in Richmond Hill at Roselawn Farm. Mary also worked to feed seven of the hired help. A year later Dick was hired by the CPR, so they moved to Toronto, then to Mount Dennis. In 1964 Mary moved back to Brampton to 108 Mill Street, the home of her mother, who was critically ill and in need of Mary's care.

When her mother passed away in 1965, Mary and Dick purchased that home and lived there and eventually sold it to move into the apartments by Shopper's World. The last move before Woodhall Park Retirement Village was into the Camelot Building on McLaughlin Road.

Mary and Dick enjoyed many exciting trips, which included Great Britain, Europe, and Florida.

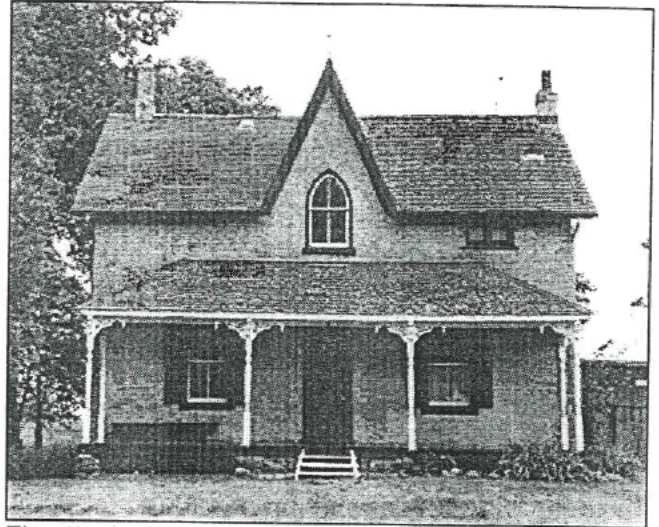
You can sit with Mary and hear her recount her experiences and sights she saw the world over. Somehow it just doesn't measure up to the way she lovingly describes her early days in Brampton.

As Mary sits in the Woodhall Park bus travelling down Kennedy Road, it's no wonder why her head is turned towards the area that used to be her farm. As we pass by I ask her if she thinks back to those days. Her reply, "I look out at the buildings now standing on what was our property, but what I am really seeing are pictures from my memory, and why not? It was a great life."

Phoenix From The Ashes: A Restoration Story

George W. J. Duncan

Fire has been the utter end of many a heritage building. It is all too common to hear about efforts to preserve historical landmarks being brought to a sudden, irrevocable end in a "mysterious fire." Here is one heritage house fire story with a positive ending.



The Monkman House: a little altered example of a classic Ontario Farmhouse

Photo and caption courtesy of George Duncan

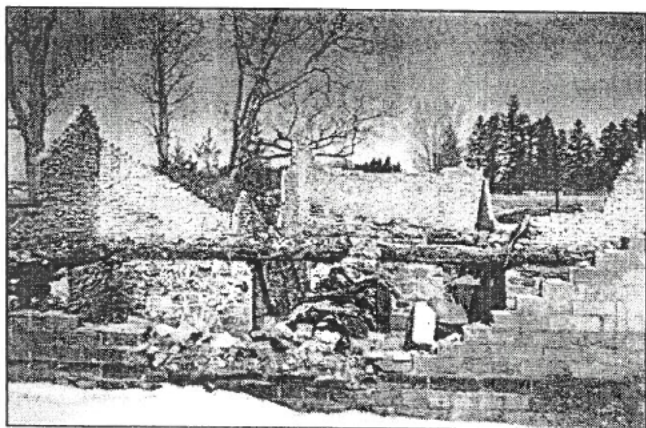
The George Monkman Jr. House was built about 1885 on a prosperous Markham Township farm (part of Richmond Hill since 1971). Like many other farmhouses of its time, it was a T-shaped, centre gable, vernacular dwelling with a Gothic window and a full-width front verandah decorated with white-painted fretwork. When it was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1995, the Monkman House was Richmond Hill's best-preserved example of a classic Ontario farmhouse.

Located on land slated for commercial development, the historic house was proposed to be moved from the interior of the former farm property to a corner site on the same property. There, it would be adapted to serve as a restaurant, office or some other complementary commercial use. When the tenants moved out, the landowner took great pains to secure the building according to the Town's standards for boarding vacant heritage buildings.

Having experienced some difficulty with historic house looters stripping buildings of vintage hardware, doors, windows, flooring etc., the LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory

Committee) asked the owners to remove any items that could be considered at risk. These were to be held for safekeeping until the house was moved and ready to restore and renovate. The verandah posts and decorative woodwork were also removed, because, believe it or not, porch theft has been a problem in the area. With the house securely boarded, a plan to preserve it and the valuable architectural features in safe storage, no one was worried about the future of the building.

On a cold winter night in February 1997, a vehicle parked on a street in a neighbouring subdivision under construction. Someone walked over to the vacant house, leaving their footprints in the snow, and started a fire at the rear of the building, and returned to their vehicle. When the fire trucks arrived, the barricaded lane made it impossible to reach the burning building. The next day, all that remained was the stone foundation and portions of buff brick veneer. The fire was so hot that a cast iron bathtub partially melted and crashed into the basement.



The morning after the fire, February 1997. The end of many a heritage house - except this one!

Photo and caption courtesy of George Duncan

Picking Up The Pieces

The Monkman House was completely destroyed - or was it? The LACAC had measured plans and photographs in their files. The architectural features removed from the building were still in safe storage. Significantly, the property owner had insurance on the building, and was willing to donate the proceeds to the Town to assist with the rebuilding of the house on another site.

The circumstances were most unusual. Generally, when an historical building burns to the ground, it is gone for good. In this case, there existed an opportunity to reconstruct the Monkman House using some of the original components, thus preserving the essence of the structure that was.

A quantity of the brick veneer was salvaged after the fire to add to the materials already in storage.

Finding A Place

To preserve some of the historical context of the reconstructed Monkman House, it was decided to locate the building on a lot reserved for heritage homes within the same area. The new site, a little west of the original, was a Town-owned building lot, one of three heritage lots in Richmond Hill's Heritage Enclave. This land was purchased by the municipality in 1995, in response to the potential loss of many significant heritage houses within a major development block. The heritage lots were intended to provide a place for threatened historical buildings to be relocated to, keeping them within the part of the community where they were originally built.

A request for proposals for the heritage lot and the reconstruction of the Monkman House issued by the municipality resulted in several bids. The successful bidder, a Richmond Hill resident, had been following the progress of the project for some time. In order to qualify for the purchase, the applicant had to agree to enter into a detailed Heritage Easement Agreement that provides for the reconstruction of the building and its ongoing maintenance.

Rebirth

Plans for the reconstruction of the building have been reviewed and approved in principle by the LACAC. Essentially, the exterior must duplicate, as far as possible, the design and materials of the Monkman House as it was prior to the fire. Any 20th century alterations were excluded, such as an exterior chimney, later bathroom window openings, and an infilled rear verandah.

The Monkman House will thus be reborn, like the legendary phoenix, as the result of a unique set of circumstances. Hopefully, construction will begin this fall. Locating an appropriate buff coloured clay brick is expected to be the project's greatest challenge, as very little of the original brick was in a condition to be salvaged after the devastating fire.

While the reconstruction of the George Monkman Jr. House is admittedly not pure heritage conservation, it does return the building to the community's landscape as a reminder of the rural past. When rebuilt, in a way the house will prove a point that in spite of the often times overwhelming odds against heritage conservation efforts, the "good guys" can still win!



KEE NOTES FROM FRED

By Fred Kee

Westervelt's Corners Lot 11 West Chinguacousy

Westervelt's Corners was the postal address for mail delivery up to about 1910, but after that Brampton and district were calling it simply #10. In later years even the polling station was identified as "#10"

FOR SALE: Well-known Tavern Stand at Westervelt's Corners one of the best in the county. The house is large and commodious with stables, driving house and sheds. Located on about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of land, stocked with the choicest of fruit trees. Owned by James Westervelt. Apply to George Hawkins, Auctioneer and General Land Agent, Streetsville.

Brampton Standard, March 27 1853.

Courtesy of Peel Archives

Tavern Stand Does Not Stand Still

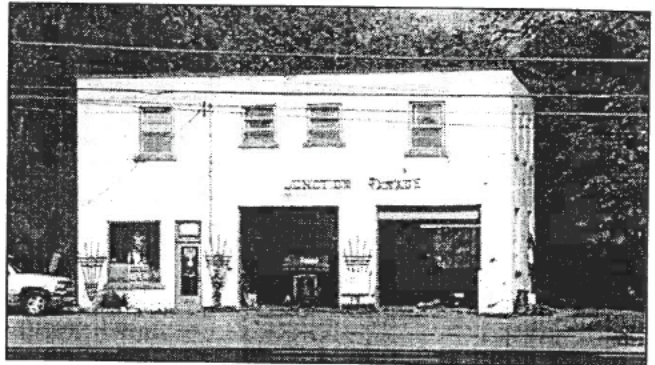
From oral history, a letter written by Jane (Bovaird) Dodd and forwarded by Frances Dodd, daughter of Edward and Jane Dodd tells that in the 1880's the inn was run by Rutherford as the Rutherford Inn and was a well-run inn.

About 1900 John (Jack) Smithers bought the hotel, then divided the building into two sections, moving one half fifty yards back, west of the original building. Thus the popular ballroom became a second floor storeroom for lumber, hay, feed and all sorts of things. The lower part, which had been the barroom became a workshop and shed. The remaining part of

the building was used as a store and residence and ice cream parlour.

This was also the bus stop for the Arrow Bus Line that travelled from Toronto to Guelph and London after the highway was paved in 1925. The bus delivered parcels as well as passengers.

After Mr. Smithers's death in the early thirties Thompson Russell purchased the property and began major renovations. Thompson Russell at that time was the lessee of the British American Oil service station on the opposite corner.



The Junction Garage (formerly the BA Oil Service Station) is still open for business!

First he moved the building back from the highway, about thirty yards from both highways to where it stands today, known as the White Motor Grill.

Before Westervelt sold the Inn, he had built a brick house north of the Inn. James Westervelt had a son who lived in the house after his father's death. A.P. Westervelt was a well-known stockbreeder and showman and at one time was manager of the Royal Winter Fair.

Maylon Simpson - who was foreman at the Brampton Brickyard all his working days - purchased the home. He eventually sold it to his son-in-law Raymond Newns. This property is now Midas Muffler.

(Continued on Page 5)

Application for membership in the **BRAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY** (bramhis@home.com)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

E mail: _____

Additional Household Members: _____

Signature: _____

☐ I enclose a Household Membership fee of \$20 for a full year or \$10 for a half year

☐ I wish to enclose an additional donation to the Society of \$ _____

Please mail cheque or money order to:
Brampton Historical Society
c/o Peter Murphy, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
American money accepted at par